

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

On page 1, please delete the title and replace with the following new title:

“Merge Method and Node for Consolidating a Plurality of Communication Connections in a Connection-Oriented Network”

On page 12, please replace the paragraph beginning at line 13 with the following amended paragraph:

A<sup>1</sup> The MPLS network 1 is ~~considered~~ comprised of LSRs 101 to 104. Respective LSRs 101 to 104 are connected to links 201 to 203. On the other hand, ~~an~~ a LSP 301 is set from the LSR 101 to the LSR ~~102~~ 103 via the LSR ~~103~~ 102.

On page 12, please replace the paragraph beginning at line 16 with the following amended paragraph:

A<sup>2</sup> Fig. 2 is a flowchart showing an operation in ~~an~~ a LSR 102 in the first embodiment of the communication merge system according to the present invention, and Fig. 3 is a flowchart showing an operation in ~~an~~ a LSR 103 in the first embodiment of the communication connection merge system according to the present invention. The operation of the first embodiment of ~~he~~ the present invention will be discussed with reference to Figs. 1 to 3.

On page 13, please replace the paragraph beginning at line 10 with the following amended paragraph:

A<sup>3</sup> As a result of judgment at step S2, if LSP, in which a common route from the LSR 102 to the LSR 103 ~~is common~~ is present, a check is performed whether the existing LST ~~have~~ has the same kind of parameter as that of the LSP to be newly established (step S3 of Fig. 2). If the existing route does not have the same kind of parameter as that of the LSP to be newly established., merge cannot be performed. Therefore, the process is advanced to the LSP establishing procedure without performing merge (step S12 of Fig. 2.)

On page 13, please replace the paragraph beginning at line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

A 4  
As a result of judgment at step S3, it is assumed that the LSP 301 ~~having~~ has the same kind of parameter as the LSP to be newly set, ~~is present~~. In this case, a check is performed in the LSR 102 whether or not the parameter of the LSP 301 can be modified (step S4 of Fig. 2). If modification of the parameter is not possible, the process is advanced to the LSP establishing procedure without performing merge (step S12 of Fig. 2).

On page 14, please replace the paragraph beginning at line 14 with the following amended paragraph:

A 6  
As a result of checking at step S22, if modification is possible, modification of the parameter is ~~temporarily~~ temporary (step S23 of Fig. 3). Here, if the own node is the egress LSR, the modification of the parameter is fixed as is (steps S24 and S27 of Fig. 3). In the case of the LSR 103, since it is the egress LSR, this procedure is applied.